United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1246
13 October 1992

TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Security Council unanimously endorses proposal by Secretary-General to appoint interim Special Representative for Mozambique and to dispatch 25 military observers to that country.

+ In second unanimous decision this afternoon, Council demands that Democratic Kampuchea immediately fulfil its obligations under Paris Agreements and facilitate full deployment of United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia in areas under its control.

+ Armenia calls for urgent meeting of Security Council to consider crisis in Nagorno-Karabakh; asks for designation of special representative and deployment of United Nations observers to area to assist in bringing about lasting cease-fire; Security Council holds consultations on request.

+ Saddened by tragedy of earthquake that struck Egypt yesterday, Secretary-General investigates ways in which United Nations can help local authorities.

+ Need for further measures to integrate disabled persons into society stressed by speakers, as General Assembly wraps up commemorative meeting marking end of Decade for Disabled Persons.

+ Philippines asks for inclusion of additional item in General Assembly agenda on emergency assistance to that country; request follows recent eruptions of Mount Pinatubo volcano causing extensive damage.

* * *

The Security Council this afternoon unanimously endorsed a proposal by the Secretary-General to appoint an interim Special Representative for Mozambique and to dispatch 25 military observers to that country as put forward in his report of 9 October.

The Council took that action by adopting resolution 782 (1992), in which it said it looked forward to a new report of the Secretary-General on the

(more)

For information media—not an official record

establishment of a United Nations Operation in Mozambique (UNOMO), including in particular a detailed estimate of the cost of the operation.

Addressing the Council after the vote, the representative of Mozambique said the Council's decision to send the first group of 25 observers to his country was of "paramount importance" for Mozambique, as it would ensure respect for and the succesful implementation of the Peace Agreement. Under that agreement, three main Commissions would be chaired by the United Nations: the Commission to supervise and to control the implementation of the Agreement; the Commission on the cease-fire; and the Commission on reintegration. The holding of the cease-fire, which de jure should enter into force on 15 October, largely depended on the work of these bodies and the adequate and active presence of United Nations observers in the field, he said.

In his report of 9 October to the Council, the Secretary-General said he would appoint immediately an interim Special Representative for Mozambique who would be in overall charge of United Nations activities in support of the Agreement signed by the President of Mozambique and the leader of the Mozambique National Resistence Movement (RENAMO) on 4 October in Rome.

The Mozambican President had asked the United Nations, in a letter of 4 October, to undertake a major role in monitoring the Agreement, including functions relating to the cease-fire, the elections, which are scheduled for spring 1993, and humanitarian assistance. With regard to the elections, the United Nations has been asked to both monitor the electoral process and to provide technical assistance.

It was later announced that Aldo Ajello of Italy has been appointed interim Special Representative for Mozambique.

* * *

The Security Council has unanimously demanded that the party of Democratic Kampuchea immediately fulfil its obligations under the Paris Agreements and facilitate without delay the full deployment of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) in the areas under its control.

The Council's action came in the second of two meetings this afternoon when it adopted resolution 783 (1992). The Council expressed deep concern over the difficulties faced by UNTAC, caused in particular by security and economic conditions in Cambodia, and noted that by cooperating with UNTAC, the three other Cambodian parties had met their obligations under the Paris Agreements.

The text reaffirmed that UNTAC must have full and unrestricted access to the areas controlled by each of the parties and demanded full respect for the cease-fire, calling upon all parties in Cambodia to cooperate fully to identify minefields and to refrain from any activity aimed at enlarging the

(more)

territory under their control. The Council further demanded that the parties facilitate UNTAC investigations of reports of foreign forces, foreign assistance and cease-fire violations within their territory.

By the resolution, the Council confirmed that the electoral process be carried out in the timetable laid down in the implementation plan, and that the election for a constituent assembly be held no later than May 1993. It expressed gratitude to the Government of Japan and Thailand for their efforts to find solutions to the current problems and urged them, in cooperation with the co-Chairmen, to continue their efforts and to report to the Secretary-General and the co-Chairmen on the outcome.

By tonight's text the Council also asked the Secretary-General to report back to it no later than 15 November on the implementation of this resolution, and said that if the present difficulties are not overcome, it would consider what further steps were necessary to ensure the realization of the objectives of the Paris Agreements.

* * *

Armenia has appealed to the United Nations to "lend its vast experience and established mechanisms" to bring about and implement a lasting cease-fire agreement in the Nogorno-Karabakh conflict. The country has called for an urgent meeting of the Security Council, saying the Armenian Government believes that this is the appropriate time for the direct involvement of the United Nations.

In a letter to the President of the Security Council, dated 12 October, Armenian Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Alexander Arzoumanian, specifically requested that the Secretary-General designate a special representative for the area as soon as possible and that a team of observers be sent to the region to "assist the parties in reaching a cease-fire agreement and monitor the situation thereafter".

The letter charged serious and continuing violations of the cease-fire agreement, negotiated by representatives of the Russian Federation, Kazakhstan and the Defence Ministers of Armenia and Azerbaijan, which was to have become effective on 26 September. If effective mechanisms were put in place, the agreement could be successfully implemented, the letter said.

The Armenian request follows a Presidential Statement by the Security Council on 26 August, in which Council Members said they would consider further the role of the United Nations in Nagorno-Karabakh in light of the developements in the area.

* * *

Deeply saddened and grieved by the tragedy that struck Egypt yesterday, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali is currently investigating ways in which the United Nations system can help the Egyptian authorities to alleviate the effects of the earthquake.

(more)

His Spokesman told correspondents this morning that the Secretary-General had sent a message of sympathy to the Egyptian Prime Minister, in which he offers such assistance. The President of the General Assembly had also sent a message of sympathy to the Government and people of Egypt for the "tragic loss of life and extensive material damage" that resulted from yesterday's earthquake.

* * *

Persons with disabilities should be given real opportunities to participate in the formation of society, the Minister of Social Affairs of Norway, Grete Knudsen, told the General Assembly's special session today, as delegates and special guests wrapped up the two-day special plenary to mark the conclusion of the Decade of Disabled Persons (1983-1992).

Outlining aspects of her Government's four-year plan of action, the Norwegian Minister said her country had focused on the participation of persons with disabilities and their organizations in planning and decision-making in those areas of society where such persons were significant consumers of services. In order to ensure participation in community planning, Norway had encouraged all communities and cities to establish local councils on disability and develop local plans for the integration of persons with disabilities.

The representative of the Philippines, Leticia Ramos Shahani, said hers was perhaps the only country which had enacted as part of its Constitution, a provision for the protection of the disabled. She attributed the increase of persons with disabilities in her country to endemic poverty factors, the effects of the insurgency war and natural disasters. The recent wave of calamites, such as the Mount Pinatubo volcano eruptions and mudflows and tidal waves, had unleashed untold suffering for peasants and tribal people, fisherfolk and poor communities, she said.

In an opening statement to the Assembly yesterday, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali called for broad action to meet the objectives of equality and full participation for disabled persons in society. War was a major cause of disablement and mines were of particular danger, he said. Many of those who voted in last week's elections in Angola, for example, had suffered war injuries. The United Nations had to work both to prevent the situations which cause war and to assist the victims of war and the disabled to play their full part in society, he said.

The Decade was launched by the General Assembly in 1983 to increase international awareness of environmental and social barriers to full integration of disabled persons into society, and has stressed as a guiding philosophy a shift away from charity towards integrated social development. The Assembly is expected to adopt a draft text on the matter at its final meeting today.

* * *

(more)

The Philippines has asked for the inclusion of an additional item in the agenda of the General Assembly's 47th session, entitled "Emergency assistance to the Philippines". The request follows the most recent eruptions of the Mount Pinatubo volcano, compounded by three successive typhoons that have caused extensive damage in the country.

In a letter to the Secretary-General, dated 7 October, the Philippino Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Narcisa L. Escaler, said urgent international assistance was vitally needed to alleviate the effects of the eruption of the Mount Pinatubo vulcano which continued to "wreak havoc and destruction in Central Luzon". The gravest and immediate threats to life and property came from flows and flash flooding of heavily silted rivers, exacerbated by a spate of typhoons that have struck the northern Philippines, the letter said.

The most recent eruptions had spawned lahar flows and flash floods that had left, as of 9 September, 36 people killed, 10 injured, 15 missing and some 940,000 people displaced. As of 5 October, total crop damage amounted to over 5 billion pesos.

* *** *